

THE

SANDMAN ♦ UNIVERSE

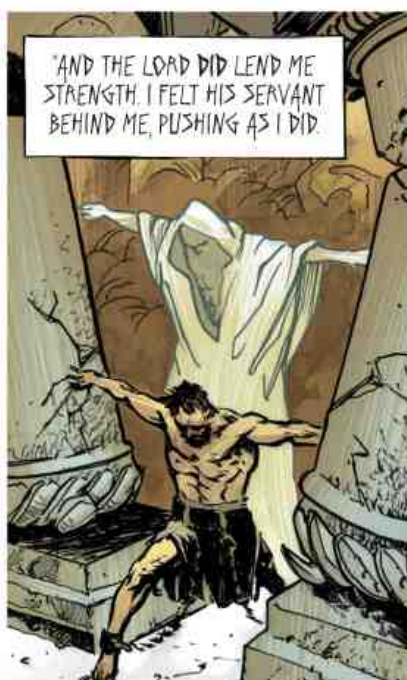
Lucifer

12

DC
VERTIGO

MATURE
READERS

Dan Watters
Max Fiumara
Dave McCaig



"BUT IT WAS A SUICIDE
NONETHELESS AND SUICIDES
ARE PUNISHED IN HELL

"I HAD SUFFERED MY ENTIRE
LIFE FOR THE LORD. I HAD
DIED FOR HIM. AND NOW I
LEARNED I WAS TO SUFFER
FOR ALL ETERNITY.

"TO GROW IN HELL'S
SUICIDE FOREST.

"TO BE TORN BY HARPY
CLAW AND BURNED BY
FLAME, FOR DOING WHAT
HE HAD ASKED OF ME.

"THUS I RESIGNED
MYSELF, UNTIL
SALVATION CAME."

QUICKLY,
BEFORE OUR
BLOODY ANGEL
OVERLORDS
SEE US.

LUCIFER SAYS
HE NEEDS SOMEONE
LOYAL TO SERVE AS A
TOOL FOR HIS TRIP, TO
REMINDE HIM OF
HELL IF HE
FORGETS.

SOMEONE
STRONG.
SOMEONE
STURDY.

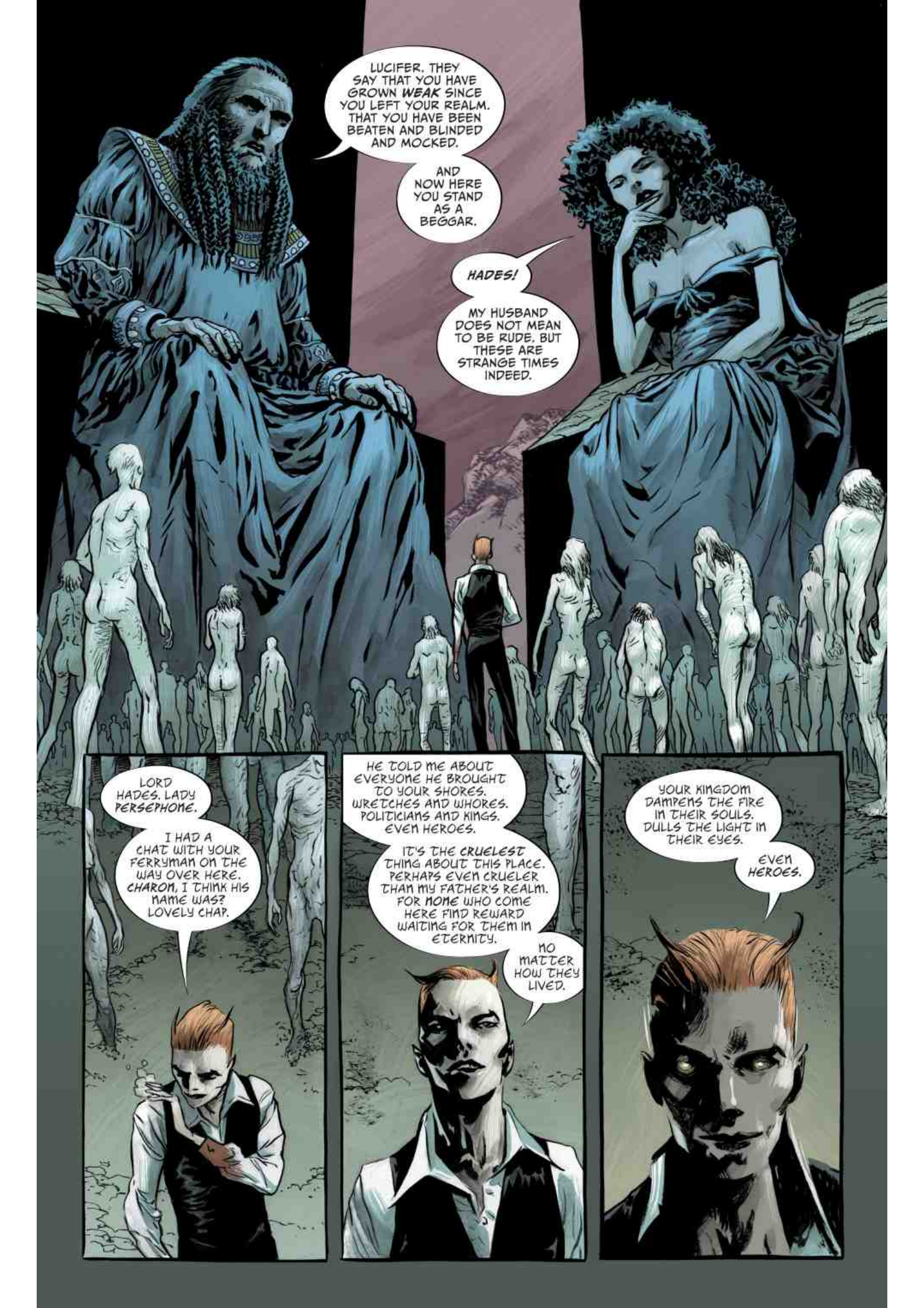
ME! PICK ME!
WHEN I LIVED I
HAD THE
STRENGTH OF
TEN MEN

IS THAT--
SAMSON? WILL
HE DO?

SURE.
WHATEVER.
JUST BE
QUICK.

"THE AGONY AS THEY TORE
AND WHITTLED ME WAS AS
NOTHING I'D FELT IN A
MILLENNIA OF TORTURE..."





LUCIFER, THEY SAY THAT YOU HAVE GROWN **WEAK** SINCE YOU LEFT YOUR REALM. THAT YOU HAVE BEEN BEATEN AND BLINDED AND MOCKED.

AND NOW HERE YOU STAND AS A **BEGGAR**.

HADES!

MY HUSBAND DOES NOT MEAN TO BE RUDE, BUT THESE ARE **STRANGE TIMES** INDEED.

LORD HADES. LADY PERSEPHONE.

I HAD A CHAT WITH YOUR FERRYMAN ON THE WAY OVER HERE. CHARON, I THINK HIS NAME WAS? **LOVELY CHAP.**

HE TOLD ME ABOUT EVERYONE HE BROUGHT TO YOUR SHORES. **WRETCHES AND WHORES. POLITICIANS AND KINGS. EVEN HEROES.**

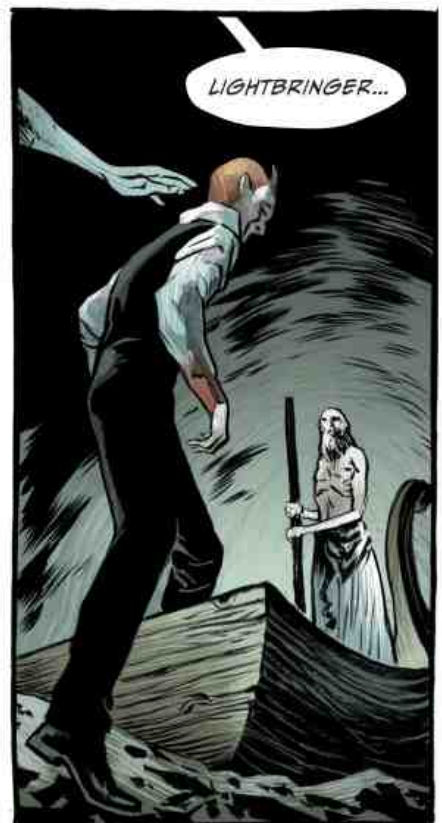
IT'S THE **CRUELEST** THING ABOUT THIS PLACE. PERHAPS EVEN **CRUELER** THAN MY FATHER'S REALM. FOR NONE WHO COME HERE FIND REWARD WAITING FOR THEM IN **ETERNITY.**

NO MATTER HOW THEY LIVED.

YOUR KINGDOM DAMPENS THE FIRE IN THEIR SOULS. DULLS THE LIGHT IN THEIR EYES.

EVEN HEROES.





"...I BEG YOU
FOR RAGE."

W-what
have I
done?

WHELL.
QHITE CREARLY
YEW HUV
MURHURED AN
ANGHEL.

I didn't
mean to...

But the
things he
said...the rage
he lit within
me.

AHT REAST
YEW HAD RHE
PRESHENS OH
MIND TEW DO IH
HERE.

WHERE
RAGUEL
CANNOH SHEE
YEW.

How can
you be so calm,
Mazikeen? Look
at what I have
done.

SHUH
UP.

I HAF BEEN
MURHURED RHYSELF,
IN RHE LASHT
TWENTY-FOAH
HOURS. UND NO-UNH
SHEEMS TO HAH
NOTISHED.

I HAF
RESHURRECTED
MYSHELF PHROUGH
BLOOD MAGICHS.
REGHROAN EASH
ARSHERY ONE
RHY ONE.

AND
YEW HAF
BLOOD ONH
YOAH HANDSH BY
YAWH OWNH
DOING?!





WHERE IS DIRI OF THE CHERUBIM? HE IS... FAVORED, AND YOUR BASTARD SON, CALIBAN, MUST HAVE TAKEN HIM.



I KNOW NOT. I CARE NOT. I HAVE NEVER CARED FOR ANGELS, OR FOR YOUR FATHER'S REIGN OF TYRANNY, YET YOU NEVER LET ME BE.

I STILL HAVE TWELVE HOURS BEFORE MY DEATH, ACCORDING TO YOUR HOLY DECREE. GO AWAY.



YOUR EXISTENCE HERE IS A BLASPHEMY, AND YOU HAVE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF HIS GRACE.

NOW I, AVATAR OF HIS WILL, SHALL UNMAKE YOU.

STAY THE HELL AWAY



STAY WITH YOUR HAND



H'RONMEER, THE MARTIAN GOD OF DEATH, HAS ONLY A SINGLE WORSHIPPER LEFT ALIVE. HE ASKS LUCIFER IF IT'S TRUE A MORTAL CUT OUT HIS TONGUE.



LUCIFER COMMANDS H'RONMEER'S FIRES TO RUN WILD, UNTIL THE FLAME-SHY MARTIAN DEAD ALMOST TEAR THEIR GOD APART IN PANIC.

LUCIFER DECIDES THAT THIS ALIEN UNDERWORLD IS NO HOME FOR SYCORAX.

IN NIFLHEIM, HEL TELLS LUCIFER SHE'S HEARD HE WEPT IN THE PRESENCE OF A MORTAL.

LUCIFER RETURNS HER LOST STEED, THE THREE-LEGGED HELHEST, FOUND GRAZING IN PURGATORY. HEL WEEPS TO SEE HIM.

LUCIFER DECIDES THAT THIS NORDIC UNDERWORLD IS NO HOME FOR SYCORAX.



THE PARLIAMENT OF TREES TELL LUCIFER THEY'VE HEARD HE'S ALMOST DESTROYED MULTIPLE UNDERWORLDS IN THE LAST THREE DAYS.



THEY ARE VERY SORRY TO TELL HIM THAT IT SIMPLY ISN'T POSSIBLE FOR A BEING OF FLESH TO JOIN THEIR RANKS.

IF THERE IS ANYTHING ELSE THEY CAN HELP HIM WITH, HE NEED ONLY ASK.

HE ACCEPTS THAT THIS VEGETABLE UNDERWORLD IS NO HOME FOR SYCORAX.

AT THE GATES OF GUINEE, BARON LA CROIX DOES NOT MOCK LUCIFER EITHER. WHY WOULD HE? LA CROIX IS A CLOWN HIMSELF, WHEN IT SUITS. HE KNOWS IT MAKES HIM NO LESS GREAT AND TERRIBLE.

BUT HE TELLS LUCIFER THAT THERE IS NO PLACE FOR SYCORAX IN HIS UNDERWORLD.



"SHE WOULD NOT FAVOR IT, FOR SHE IS OF FIRE, AND THIS PLACE IS OF WATER.

"INSTEAD," HE SUGGESTS, "WHY DON'T YOU TAKE HER WHERE GODS GO WHEN THEY DIE? THE DREAM LORD FAVORED HER ONCE, DID HE NOT? HE EVEN COMMISSIONED A PLAY REGARDING HER TRAGEDY.



"WHY DON'T YOU GO TO THE DREAMING, LUCIFER?"

AND SO, HE DOES.





CARIBUH?

CARIBUH!



LAY
SHTILL.

ANGHEL
FLESH HASH
POISHONED
YEWH.

I-it is
killing
me.



I-it is
what I
deserve.

I have seen
what fate awaits
me, Mazikeen.
It is of horrors.
But so is the
world.



Perhaps only
in this amphibious
moment between life
and death I will know
a moment's
peace.



RUCIFUH.



RUCIFUH!

THOUGH THEY TREMBLE AND SHAKE, THE GATEKEEPERS OF THE DREAMING ATTEMPT TO KEEP LUCIFER OUT.

THEY STALL FOR TIME, AND LUCIFER KNOWS THEY'RE CALLING FOR REINFORCEMENTS.

HE REMEMBERS THAT THE DREAM HE KNEW HAD DIED QUITE SOME TIME AGO.

THERE ARE NO FAVORS OWED HERE.

M-MAYBE
H-H-HE'LL JUST
GO AWAY BY
H-H-HIMSELF?

AW HELL,
AS IF WE AIN'T
GOT ENOUGH
TO DEAL WITH.
WHAT DOES HE
WANT?

OF COURSE
HE WON'T.

LUCIFER DECIDES
THAT THIS IS
DEFINITELY NO
HOME FOR
SYCORAX.

AND TIME IS UP. HE IS BEING
CALLED BACK TO EARTH.
HE HEARS SLURRED WORDS
FROM AN EXQUISITE,
HALF-ROTTED THROAT...





...IT'S
WHAT WE
COULD NOT
HAVE.



LUCIFER, YOU
DO NOT GET TO
SUMMON ME AT
YOUR WHIM.

NO, SORRY.
YOU CLEARLY
HAVE EVERYTHING
UNDER
CONTROL.

TAKE MY
HAND. COME
BACK TO THE
ISLAND.



SYCORAX,
IT'S CALIBAN.
HE'S...

...JUST
COME WITH
ME.



GO ALONG.
FLEE FROM
YAHWEH'S EYE
ONCE MORE, FOR
YOU CANNOT
BEAR TO--

YOU MOCK
ME, ARCHANGEL,
THOUGH YOUR
FATHER LETS
YOU DO
NOTHING.



LET'S SEE HOW
YOU FARE WITHOUT HIS
PRESENCE LOOMING
ABOVE YOU.

RAGUEL!







DIRI?!

NO...
WHAT HAS
HE...



WHAT HAVE
YOU DONE,
MAZIKEEN?



WITH THIS
ACT, CALIBAN HAS
WAGED WAR ON
THE HOST, AND
MUST DIE.



I AM
HIS RIGHT
HAND. HIS
WRATH.



HE MUST
BE MADE TO
FEEL THE
HUUURTING.

YOU ALL
MUST. IT'S
SO CLEAR
TO ME
NOW...

EXISTENCE IS
WHAT SEPARATES
US FROM HIS
TOTALITY...

"EXISTENCE IS *SUFFERING*,
AND MY BRETHREN MUST
BE SPARED.

"I SHALL *FREE*
THEM--SEND
THEM TO THE
WARM EMBRACE
OF THE VOID.



"AND THEN WHEN
THE SILVER CITY IS
FINALLY STILL, I
SHALL JOIN THEM.

"PERHAPS
NOTHINGNESS IS
NOT THE VOID WE
WERE *BORN* FROM.
BUT IT IS A VOID
NONETHELESS.



"DEVOID OF
THE *ANGUISH*
OF FREE WILL.

"OF THE
HUUUUURTING



BUT FIRST--
CALIBAN. FOR
DECLARING
WAR ON
HEAVEN.

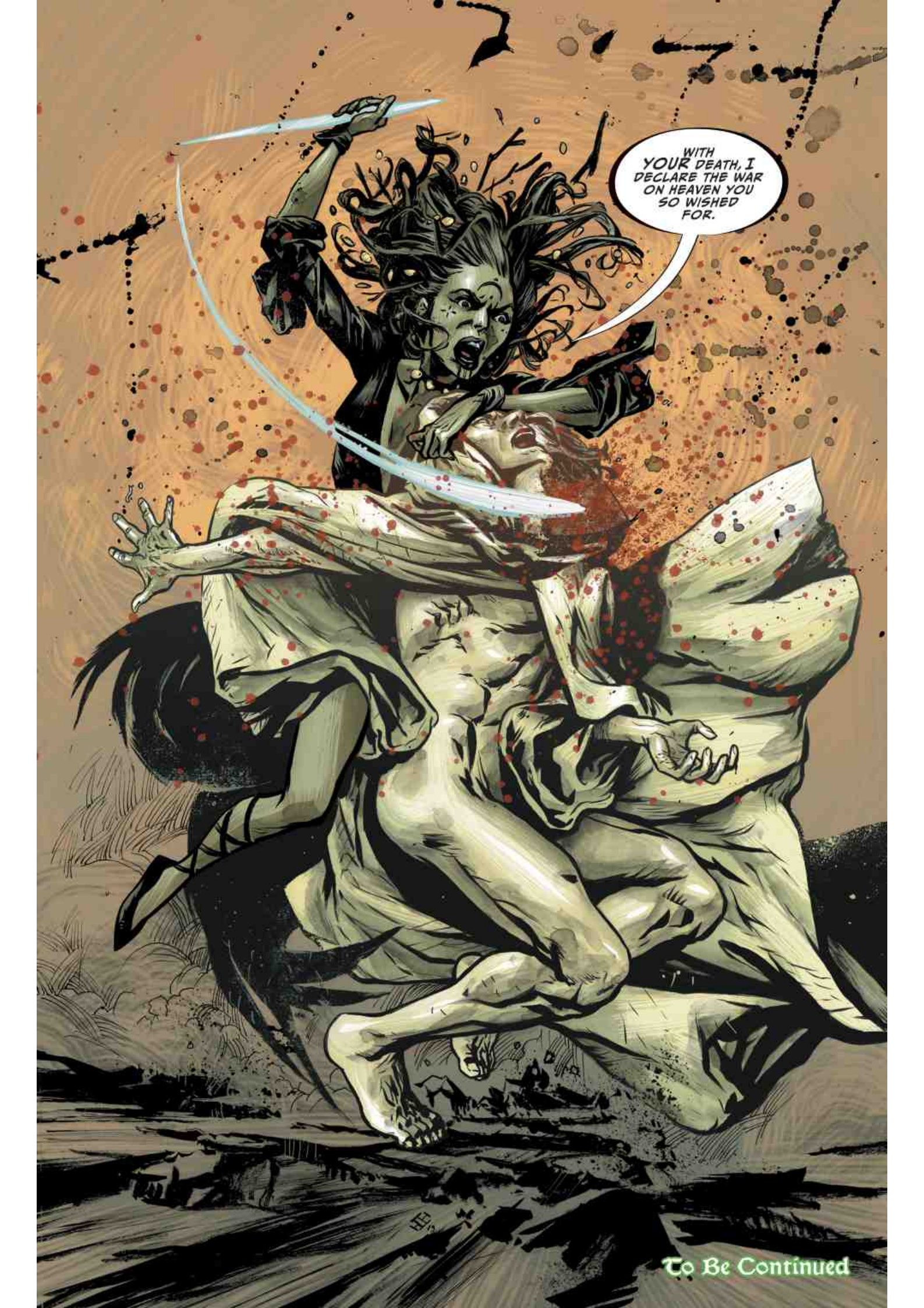


HE HAS NOT
DECLARED WAR ON
HEAVEN, RAGUEL.
ONLY UPON YOU,
I FEAR.



OH, BUT
ARCHANGEL...





WITH
YOUR DEATH, I
DECLARE THE WAR
ON HEAVEN YOU
SO WISHED
FOR.

To Be Continued

Lucifer

"AND HE SAID STAY THY HAND"

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NEXT ISSUE: A SECOND, RATHER IMPROMPTU, WAR ON HEAVEN

A revolution is declared,
Sycorax makes a fateful
choice, and Lucifer
experiences something he has
not tasted since he fell from
Heaven: failure.

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SON OF ULTRON

"THIS FAN...
THIS MONSTER!"

